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Where Did "Jehovah" Come From?

Justin Rogers, Ph.D.

Article In Brief...

The English term "Jehovah" is a Medieval attempt to approximate the divine Hebrew name (YHWH). However, no one knows how the name was originally pronounced. Hence, the term "Jehovah" is no more literal, respectful, or accurate than other typical attempts to represent the original term.

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THE personal name of God in the Hebrew Bible is יהוה (YHWH). Occurring over 6,800 times in the Old Testament, this name is by far the most common way of referring to God. Translations and traditions have developed a number of ways to represent this name respectfully without crudely spelling out "Yahweh." English translations have typically chosen "Lord," following the custom initiated by the Septuagint, and perpetuated in the Latin Vulgate. Normally, the small caps typeset ("LORD") is used in mass-produced English translations to mark YHWH as the underlying

Hebrew, as opposed to "Lord," which normally renders the Hebrew *'ādōn*. Some Jewish traditions, however, choose to render YHWH as "HaShem" (literally, "the name"). The ASV (1901) is unique among mainstream translations in opting for "Jehovah" as the preferred translation for YHWH. To be clear, none of these renderings is a translation per se. They are merely reflections of respect for the personal name of God.

RESPECT FOR THE NAME OF GOD

RESPECT for the personal name of God was an established custom already in the earliest history of Israel. Proper esteem for the Name is one of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:7; Deuteronomy 5:11), and cursing the Name is a sin punishable by death (Leviticus 24:10-16). After all, one's name stands in for his or her essence (which is why changes of names are important). With the Bible placing such importance on the name of

God, it is no surprise to find Jewish people in the post-biblical period going to great lengths to reverence the name YHWH.

Some Dead Sea Scrolls manuscripts have the name of God in Paleo-Hebrew, a more archaic form of the Hebrew language. Instead of יהוה in the traditional block characters, the name of God in Paleo-Hebrew appears as יהוה. The name of God is the only word in those manuscripts written in this fashion—indicating respect. Likewise, when the translators of the Old Testament into Greek rendered the personal name of God, they chose the Greek word κύριος (*kyrios*), meaning "lord." This may indicate that Jews as early as the third century B.C. were already pronouncing the Hebrew term אדון (*'ādōn*), meaning "Lord," when they encountered YHWH in the text. Fear of mispronouncing the holy, personal name of God perhaps led them to develop the custom of not pronouncing it at all. Consequently, we have no sure idea how the name ought to be pronounced at any stage of the language.

WHERE DID "JEHOVAH" COME FROM?

THE word "Jehovah" is a Medieval mistranscription from the Masoretic Hebrew Bible. It takes the consonants of the divine name YHWH and combines them with the vowels of another Hebrew word, *'dōnāy* ("my lord"). How such a combination occurred might be worth explaining a little more, so we begin by discussing briefly the consonantal nature of the Hebrew language and the Masoretic vowel additions.

Hebrew is a language of consonants. Vowel sounds are spoken of course, but are not traditionally written. This custom dates to ancient times. As a result, we are

unable to determine exactly how the Hebrew language in the Old Testament era was pronounced. Concern, however, to preserve the precise pronunciation of the text led a group of Jewish scribes in the Middle Ages, known as the Masoretes, to invent and apply vowel symbols to the traditional consonantal text. The two oldest manuscripts of the Masoretic Hebrew Bible—the Aleppo and Leningrad codices—feature these vowel markings.

Jewish scribes were very traditional, and thus scrupulously copied the text exactly as they received it, even if they were certain they were passing along an erroneous reading. When the Masoretes encountered a text they believed to be corrupt, or one that made no sense when read publicly, they marked the word or phrase with a marginal correction known as the *q̄rī*, literally meaning “it is read.” What was copied in the body of the text came to be known as the *k̄tīv* (“it is written”). When one read the Hebrew text publicly, he was supposed to replace the *k̄tīv* with the *q̄rī* for the sake of accuracy, or, in the case of the name of God, respect. The name of God is the most common *k̄tīv*/*q̄rī* combination in the Hebrew Bible. Because the name of God is so common, however, the Masoretes simply placed the vowels of the *q̄rī* around the *k̄tīv* rather than utilizing the marginal system.

The Masoretic manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible reflect the ancient custom of pronouncing ^ā*dōnāy* (ah-dohn-EYE) as the *q̄rī* in place of *YHWH* as the *k̄tīv*. The term ^ā*dōnāy* is a fitting choice of *q̄rī*. First, the noun *ʾādōn* occurs 775 times in the Old Testament, over 400 times in reference to God. Second, the suffix *-āy* is a marker of the first person singular (in address), making the *q̄rī* appear as a personal claim

on the part of the reader. In other words, the public reader of Hebrew Scripture is understood to mean “My Lord said to Moses,” or “Let them praises give my Lord.” This was intended as a symbol of respect, but the need for a more literal rendering of the name of God than the standard “Lord” created the desire to use this made-up Masoretic term in English transliteration.

The word “Jehovah” first appears in A.D. 1381. It is easy to understand where it came from. Someone simply transcribed the Masoretic *q̄rī* into a European language. In other words, someone simply took the vowels of ^ā*dōnāy* and placed them around the consonants of *YHWH*. This yields the name “Jehovah,” more or less. The Aleppo and Leningrad Codices of the Hebrew Bible write the nonsensical יהוה (Y^ēHVāH), which takes the vowels of ^ā*dōnāy* (except for the *ō*) and places them around the consonants of *YHWH*. They attempt to preserve in writing a tradition of reading.

English readers are probably wondering exactly how *YeHoWaH* becomes Jehovah. To explain, the *Y* in English represents the sound

J in certain other languages. The raised *e* is a “half-vowel,” and represents a hurried sound of barely distinguishable vocalic value (this is why ^ā*dōnāy* starts with an *a*, but the Masoretes point *YHWH* with an *e*). This “shewa,” as it is often called, is transcribed as *e* in the European languages. H is H. The long *ō* sound is reinserted (absent in the Masoretic *q̄rī*) from ^ā*dōnāy*. *W* is pronounced in many languages as the English *v*. The *ā* of ^ā*dōnāy* is represented as *a*. And, again, H is H. Taken together, this yields the word “Jehovah.”

The name Jehovah fell into fashion in early English translations. Tyndale, the Geneva Bible, and others used the term Jehovah, at least some of the time, to represent the Hebrew *YHWH*. The term occurs only four times in the King James Version of the Bible (Exodus 6:3; Psalm 83:18; Isaiah 12:2; 26:4). A mixture of “Jehovah” and “Lord” remained consistent in most English translations. The English Revised Version (1885), and its North American counterpart the American Standard Version (1901), choose “Jehovah” as its standard rendering of יהוה (*YHWH*), a name it uses over 6,800 times. The

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New World Translation of the Jehovah's Witnesses also consistently uses the name Jehovah. More recent translations have not followed suit, preferring "LORD" to "Jehovah."

The question arises, then, is "Jehovah" the real name of God? The answer is a clear and firm "no." First, the Masoretes themselves would not allege "Jehovah" represents the name of God. As we have discussed, the *k'tiv* is inspired and sacred, whereas the *q'rî* is a Masoretic protection on the way the text ought to be read. By adding the vowels of *ḏōnāy* to *YHWH*, they never intended to create a new word, but to mark a respectful reading of the personal name of God.

Second, the vowel sounds the Masoretes added to the text represent a reading tradition much later than the biblical text itself. To get a sense of how much pronunciation can change in this length of time, watch online videos of the *Canterbury Tales* read with contemporary English pronunciation. Does this **sound** anything like modern English? Even if Hebrew pronunciation remained remarkably static over that period of time (a period of 1,000 years!), the fact that the name was not transmitted with vowels renders certainty in pronunciation simply impossible. The Masoretes preserved a reading tradition passed down in **their time**, not necessarily one dating to biblical times.

Third, the Masoretes did not actually give the name *Jehovah* or its Hebrew equivalent. Remember, the Masoretes omit the *ō* vowel from the *q'rî*, yielding the nonsensical Hebrew word *YḤWāH* (it is nonsensical since every Hebrew consonant **must** have an accompanying vowel; the middle "H" does not). So, the builders of the make-believe word "Jehovah" **added** something

the Masoretic Hebrew does not have in the first place.

CONCLUSION

THE term Jehovah is less than 700 years old. Even its Hebrew near-equivalent can date no earlier than the Masoretic application of vowels to the consonantal text in the Middle Ages. The same holds true for the spelling "Yahweh," although scholars feel confident this form is much closer to the original pronunciation (based partially on ancient transliterations). That said, is it more respectful to use the name Jehovah? Some think so. Those who stringently defend the use of the name Jehovah argue their position on the basis of its being more

literal and more original. However, we have observed that the term "Jehovah" is neither original to the Bible nor to the Masoretic tradition. And it is simply inaccurate to use an English transliteration of a Hebrew word that was never intended to be pronounced in the first place. The Jewish tradition is careful not to misuse the personal name of God, distancing itself with epithets such as "the Lord" or "the Name." A biblical Israelite, if transported to modern times, would not understand what "Jehovah" even meant since it isn't actually a Hebrew word. The name Jehovah is no more literal, no more respectful, and no more accurate than the more commonly used LORD.



OUR nation's capital has many indicators of our country's religious heritage. Indeed, a host of references to God, Christ, and the Bible literally riddle the monuments and government buildings. The writings of the Founding Fathers are also filled with their belief in what they called "true religion"—referring to Christianity. They believed in the God of the Bible—to the exclusion

of all others—and they believed that atheism was foolish thinking.

But if these statements are true—and abundant evidence exists to prove them¹—why do so many claim that the Founding Fathers and the *Constitution* require "separation of church and state"? Why do courts, judges, and politicians say that there should be no crosses, or Bibles, or other Christian objects in public schools, government buildings, or public parks?

Did those who actually wrote the *Constitution* agree with them? Did the Founders believe that public expressions of Christianity should not be allowed?

In the 1947 U.S. Supreme Court case *Everson v. Board of Education*, the high court declared: “The First Amendment has erected a wall between church and state. That wall must be kept high and impregnable. We could not approve the slightest breach.” The court clearly understood the “wall” metaphor to refer to expunging all references to God, the Bible, and Christianity from public life. But where did they get such an idea? After all, the phrase “separation of church and state” is not even found in the *U.S. Constitution* or any other official government document. Indeed, the late U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist labeled the phrase “a misleading metaphor” and noted: “The ‘wall of separation between church and State’ is a metaphor based on bad history, a metaphor which has proved useless as a guide to judging. It should be frankly and explicitly abandoned.”²

The phrase was appropriated from a private letter addressed to the Danbury Baptist Association written by Thomas Jefferson while he was President—a quarter of a century after the Founding. It read in part:

Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their leg-

islature should “make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,” **thus building a wall of separation between Church & State**. Adhering to this expression of the supreme will of the nation in behalf of the rights of conscience, I shall see with sincere satisfaction the progress of those sentiments which tend to restore to man all his natural rights, convinced he has no natural right in opposition to his social duties.³

What did Jefferson mean by “a wall of separation between church and state”? Did he mean that we must keep God and the Bible **out** of public life? Or did he mean that we must keep government from interfering with the public practice of Christianity?

In their efforts to restrain the federal government from overstepping its boundaries and wielding illicit power, the Founders appended the Bill of Rights. Their stated intention was to further insure that the Federal government did not interfere with the foundational rights given by God to each citizen. The First Amendment reads: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” A careful consideration of the discussions⁴ that transpired among the Founders in their effort to achieve the proper wording yields two conclusions: (1) by “establishment of religion” they meant that no one Protestant denomination was to be elevated above the other sects and established as the state religion, and (2) by “prohibiting the free exercise thereof” they meant that the federal government was not to interfere with the free and public

practice of the Christian religion. Several historical facts verify these conclusions.

For example, the Founder who has gone down in history as the “Father of the Bill of Rights” was George Mason, himself a delegate to the Constitutional Convention. His proposed wording of the First Amendment enables us to grasp the historical context in which the Founders were attempting to frame the amendment’s intention: “All men have an equal, natural and unalienable right to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; and that no particular sect or society of **Christians** ought to be **favored or established by law** in preference to others.”⁵

The “wall” to which Jefferson referred was the fact that no power was given by the *Constitution* to Congress to establish a national church and to compel by law the worship rituals of any particular denomination. His own practices demonstrate that the courts have misapplied Jefferson’s phrase:

Two days after Jefferson wrote his “wall of separation” metaphor he attended church services held in the House of Representatives where the Speaker’s podium was used as the pulpit. This was no isolated event either as he continuously attended church services held on government property during his two terms as President. President Madison also attended church services in the House on Sundays. Even the Treasury building was used as a church on Sundays where John Quincy Adams was known to attend.⁶

In his Second Inaugural Address, Jefferson explained the role of the

(cont. on p. 140)

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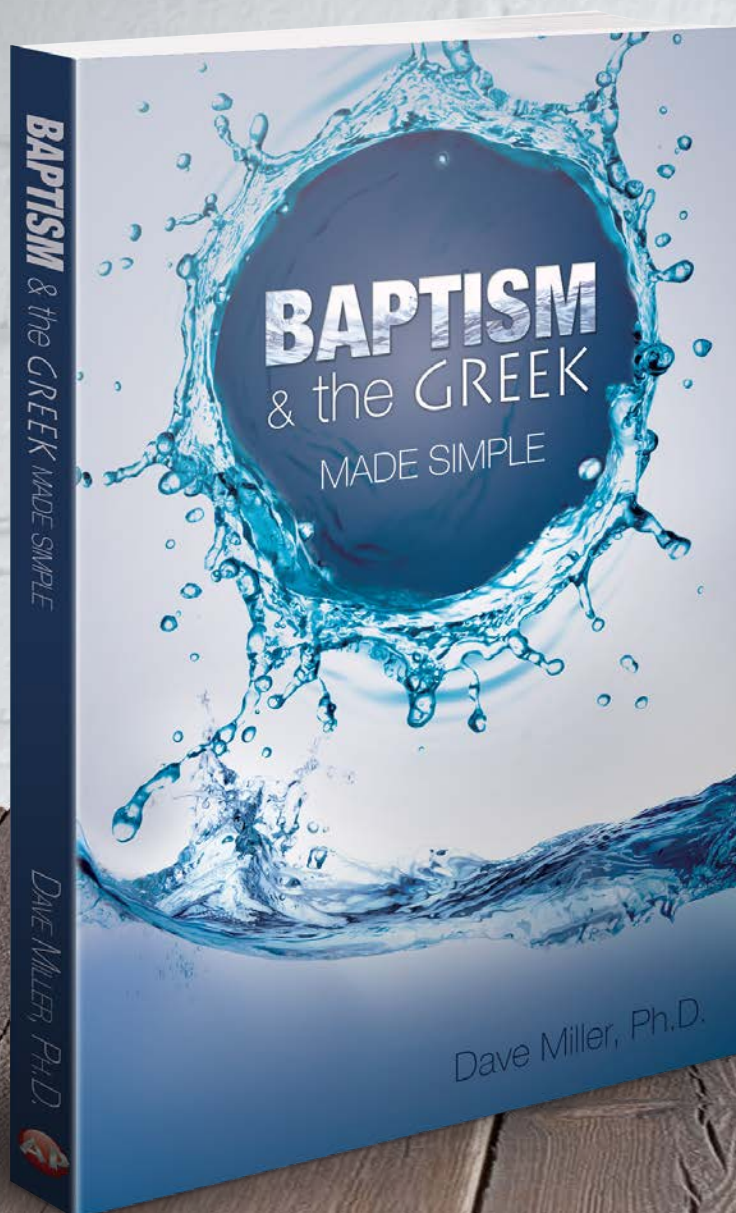
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Constitution concerning religious matters:

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Do his remarks mean that Jefferson thought all references to God and Bible religion should be avoided by the government and politicians? Surely not since in the same address, he declared:

I shall need, too, the favor of that Being in whose hands we are, who led our forefathers, as Israel of old, from their native land, and planted them in a country flowing with all the necessities and comforts of life; who has covered our infancy with his providence, and our riper years with his wisdom and power; and to whose goodness I ask you to join with me in supplications, that he will so enlighten the minds of your servants, guide their councils, and prosper their measures, that whatsoever they do, shall result in your good, and shall secure to you the peace, friendship, and approbation of all nations.⁸

The First Amendment does not ban Congress from recognizing or participating in religious practices. It only prohibits Congress from creating by law a religious establishment (state church) and requiring adherence to it. Religious symbols in schools and on public

property do not violate the First Amendment. They do not officially establish a state church, much less coerce a citizen to join it. To repeat: The First Amendment prevents government from establishing a religion and declaring by law that it is the only religion that can be practiced. It has nothing to do with acknowledging religion and its teachings—particular Christianity.

This realization naturally raises a question: If you allow the Bible and allusions to Christianity in schools and public life (as was historically the case prior to the 1960s), won't you also need to include Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam, as well as Atheism? And what about the atheists? The Founders' view was that the general doctrines of the Christian religion are the basis of the American Republic—our culture and way of life. Hence, Christianity must remain the foundation of our society or the freedom we have achieved will dissolve. Other religions can be tolerated. But if the majority of our population abandons Christianity, and other religions are allowed to increase their presence and role in American life, America will gradually become like the other nations of the world.

Indeed, if one wishes to see what America would look like if Islam exerts its influence over the nation, look at any Islamic nation on Earth. The same goes for Buddhism, Hinduism, and Atheism (as well as Socialism). Just examine all countries on the planet where those ideologies dominate. It would be irrational and nonsensical to suppose that America could continue its unprecedented freedom, prosperity, and moral structure if any of those ideologies were permitted to prevail.⁹

The truth is that the Founders' idea of religious freedom was actually quite simple and sensible—not at all like the “political correctness” of our day. The facts show that most of the Founders, with few exceptions, believed that the Christian worldview and Christian principles must be the foundation of the Republic. For example, during the Revolutionary War, the Continental Congress issued 15 proclamations to all Americans from 1775 to 1783. Those proclamations are filled with biblical references—including references to Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.¹⁰ Their view of religious freedom and tolerance simply meant that they did not want anyone persecuted or mistreated by the government due to their religious beliefs. Those who practiced no religion or a non-Christian religion could come to America and **not be persecuted**. Why? For the simple reason that most of the Founders and most Americans lived by **Christian** principles that forbid persecuting one's fellowman (Matthew 5:38-47; Luke 6:27-36). They understood Jesus' teaching to treat others the way they themselves wished to be treated (Matthew 7:12).

You see, the Founders were mostly British citizens who had felt the sting of persecution in their disagreement with the state religion (the Church of England). They were well familiar with their mother country's long history of religious oppression and bloodshed, depending on whether a Catholic or a Protestant king or queen was on the throne. The Founders' “forefathers” were the pilgrims who fled England specifically on account of religious persecution. So the Founders and Framers envi-

sioned no religious coercion in the new Republic. They believed that everyone ought to be able to decide for themselves what to believe about religion.

This view is in complete harmony with the nature of God Himself. God created humans to be free-will agents who make their own decisions with regard to their eternal destiny. God does not want Christians to force their beliefs on others (unlike Islam and the God of the Quran). However, the Founders had two concerns about tolerating false religions. They did not approve (1) any religious belief that urged a person to harm others, or (2) any religious belief that included an immoral or illegal practice (by Christian standards). So, for instance, if your religion allows you to have multiple wives, that part of your religion would not be tolerated since, by Christian standards, polygamy is sinful. Or if your religion urged you to kill Christians, your religious belief would not be allowed.¹¹ Apart from these two exceptions, the Founders believed that people ought to be left free to practice their religion without governmental interference.

However, that does not mean that the Founders wanted all religions to be given equal treatment in the public sector. As Father of American Jurisprudence Joseph Story said concerning the attitude of Americans regarding the priority of the Christian religion: "An attempt to **level all religions**, and to make it a matter of state policy to hold all in utter indifference, would have created universal disapprobation, if not universal indignation."¹² To the Founders, permitting non-Christian peoples to live in our country without per-

secution did not mean that they "celebrated diversity" or desired the spread of what they considered to be false religion. Rather, doing so reflected their desire that all peoples be allowed to pursue happiness without governmental interference.

CONCLUSION

To summarize, the Founding Fathers believed America's moral and religious foundation must be the Christian religion in order for the nation to endure.¹³ The Father of American Geography, Jedidiah Morse, provides a fitting conclusion to this brief analysis when he cogently articulated the rationale of the Founders and most early Americans:

The foundations which support the interest of Christianity, are also **necessary to support a free and equal government like our own**. In all those countries where there is little or no religion, or a very gross and corrupt one, as in Mahometan and Pagan countries, there you will find, with scarcely a single exception, arbitrary and tyrannical governments, gross ignorance and wickedness, and deplorable wretchedness among the people. **To the kindly influence of Christianity we owe that degree of civil freedom, and political and social happiness which mankind now enjoy**. In proportion as the genuine effects of Christianity are diminished in any nation, either through unbelief, or the corruption of its doctrines, or the neglect of its institutions; in the same proportion will the people of that nation **recede from the blessings of genuine freedom**, and approximate the miseries of complete despotism.¹⁴

ENDNOTES

- ¹ See, for example, Dave Miller (2008), *The Silencing of God* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press); Dave Miller (2009), *Christ and the Continental Congress* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press).
- ² Justice Rehnquist's Dissent in *Wallace v. Jaffree* (1985), United States Supreme Court, 472 U.S. 38, 105 S.Ct. 2479 (1985), http://www.belcherfoundation.org/wallace_v_jaffree_dissent.htm.
- ³ Thomas Jefferson (1802), "Jefferson's Letter to the Danbury Baptists," Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html>.
- ⁴ Annals of Congress (1789), House of Representatives, 1st Congress, 1st Session, August 15, Library of Congress, <https://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llac&fileName=001/llac001.db&recNum=380>. Also *The Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the United States* (1834-1856) (Gales and Seaton), pp. 757ff.
- ⁵ Kate Rowland (1892), *The Life of George Mason* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons), 1:244.
- ⁶ P.A. Madison (2010), "Misunderstanding Jefferson's 'Wall of Separation' Metaphor," The Federalist Blog, November 19, http://www.federalistblog.us/2010/11/_defending_jeffersons_wall_of_separation_metaphor/.
- ⁷ Thomas Jefferson (1805), "Second Inaugural Address," The Avalon Project at Yale Law School, <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/presiden/inaug/jefinau2.htm>.
- ⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹ This fact is precisely why the Founders were concerned about unrestrained immigration and its potential to alter the moral and religious fabric of the Republic. See Dave Miller (2017), *God & Government* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press), pp. 204ff.
- ¹⁰ Dave Miller (2009), *Christ and the Continental Congress* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press).
- ¹¹ For a discussion of whether the Founders agreed with the pluralistic and "politically correct" mentality of our day that encourages immigrants who do not share Christian values to come to America, see Dave Miller (2013), "Were the Founding Fathers 'Tolerant' of Islam? (Parts 1&2)," *Reason & Revelation*, 33[3/4]:26-28,32-35,38-40,45-47, March/April. Also, Miller, (2017), pp. 204ff.
- ¹² Joseph Story (1833), *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States* (Boston, MA: Hilliard, Gray, & Co.), Vol. III, Ch. 44, Paragraphs 1865-1868, emp. added.
- ¹³ For more discussion of this subject, see the DVDs *America's Most Pressing Concern and Separation of Church & State?* available from Apologetics Press.
- ¹⁴ Jedidiah Morse (1799), *A Sermon, Exhibiting the Present Dangers and Consequent Duties of the Citizens of the United States of America* (Hartford, CT: Hudson and Goodwin), <http://www.archive.org/details/sermonexhibiting00morsrich>.

Ruth, David, and a Moabite Mandate

Eric Lyons, M.Min.

RUTH 4:17 marks the first time in the English Bible that David, son of Jesse and future King of Israel, is mentioned. The events in the book of Ruth took place several decades prior to David's birth (Ruth 1:1), but the great-grandson of Ruth is mentioned twice at the end of the book (4:17,22) in order to highlight the lineage of the Messiah—from Judah's son, Perez (Ruth 4:18; Genesis 38:29; cf. 49:10), to Obed (husband of Ruth), to David (to whom God promised an heir, Who would establish an eternal kingdom—2 Samuel 7:12-13; Psalm 89:3-4; Luke 31-33).

Many skeptics question how David could be a descendant of Ruth, a Moabite, and yet also become the divinely chosen King of Israel (1 Samuel 16:1-13). After all, Moses wrote: "An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter the assembly of the Lord; even to the tenth generation none of his descendants shall enter the assembly of the Lord forever" (Deuteronomy 23:3). So how could King David, the great-grandson of a Moabite woman, be allowed into the assembly of God?

First, one must consider the meaning of the phrase "shall not enter

the assembly of the Lord." Did Moses mean that Ammonites or Moabites (1) could not live within the borders of Israel, (2) could not become part of the Israelite community in general, (3) could not gather together and become part of an actual assembly of the Israelites (cf. Deuteronomy 5:22; 9:10; 10:4; 18:16), (4) could not become one of the elders or officials who often assembled together (cf. Deuteronomy 31:28,30), and/or (5) could not become part of the religious community (cf. Leviticus 21:17-21)—that is, were they forbidden "from participation in religious rites in the homes and at the tabernacle and later at the temple"¹? While Moses and the original recipients of this command doubtlessly understood the precise meaning of Deuteronomy 23:3, those living 3,500 years this side of the giving of the Law of Moses (and who have never been accountable to that law), may never know for sure exactly what the Lord meant. And, if neither the Christian nor the skeptic can know for sure what the precise meaning of the "assembly of the Lord" is in Deuteronomy 23:3, then obviously no **proven** contradiction exists.

Second, different kinds of "outsiders" lived in and around the Israelites. With two-and-one-half tribes of Israel inhabiting the east side of the Jordan (Numbers 32), **where the Moabites and Ammonites lived** and where the Israelites were currently camping (Deuteronomy 1:5; 29:1) when Moses gave the Moabite/Ammonite restriction of Deuteronomy 23:3, he was referring to the non-converted, uncircumcised "alien" or "foreign" Moabite/Ammonite who was never to be allowed into the general Israelite community. Ruth may have been a Moabite **ethnically**, but **religiously** she was a dedicated follower of the LORD (Ruth 1:16-18), who participated in and abided by Mosaic law (Ruth 3:1-18; 4:1-12; Deuteronomy 25:5-10).² Thus, she and her faithful descendants (including David) were rightly accepted in Israel.

Another reason Deuteronomy 23:3 would not have applied to Ruth and her offspring is simply because a non-Israelite **mother** in Israel (especially one who was a proselyte!) did **not** determine the nationality of her offspring. Joseph's Egyptian wife did not make their sons Ephraim and Manasseh Egyptians (Genesis 41:50-52). Moses' marriage to Zipporah, a Midianite (Exodus 2:11-25), did not disqualify their sons Gershom and Eliezer from being Israelites (Exodus 2:22; 18:1-4), nor did it make them Midianites. Salmon's marriage to Rahab (the Jerichoan harlot) did not mean their son Boaz was a recognized Gentile of Jericho (Matthew 1:5). And the Moabitess Ruth, wife of Boaz, did not make their son Obed, their grandson Jesse, their

great-grandson David, or their descendants Joseph and Mary (the earthly parents of Jesus) anything other than legitimate descendants of Abraham (Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38)—according to the standard reckoning of Israelite heritage. In the eyes of all of Israel, David was an Israelite of the tribe of Judah—and was no more a Moabite than he was a Jerichoan.³

Although Boaz, Ruth, and David were imperfect people (Romans 3:23), who broke various Old Testament commandments (cf. Samuel 11-12), neither these three nor God (in appointing David as king over Israel) ignored or broke the law of Deuteronomy 23:3.

ENDNOTES

¹ Earl Kalland (1992), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Deuteronomy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 3:140.

² Some think that Nehemiah 13:1,25,27 contradicts this explanation of Ruth and Deuteronomy 23:3. The social situation in Ezra and Nehemiah's day (approximately 600 years after the time of Ruth), however, was quite different than what is found in the book of Ruth. Many of the Jews who had returned from 70 years of Babylonian captivity had taken for themselves "pagan" wives from among the Moabites, Ammonites, etc. (Ezra 9:1-2,14; 10:2,10-18,44; Nehemiah 13:23-30), rather than enter into lawful marriages with Jews or faithful converts to Judaism. The Old Testament prohibitions of marrying foreigners (Exodus 34:15-16; Deuteronomy 7:1-4) applied to **pagan non-converts**, not faithful proselytes.

³ He was the great-great-grandson of Rahab of Jericho, but David was not Jerichoan.



Do Visions Still Occur?

Q: *"In the history of Christianity there were many people who experienced visions. We know that the apostle Paul had visions of Jesus. He never believed in Jesus before the death and resurrection. We also know that Margaret Mary Alacoque had visions of Jesus in 1673. We also know that Bernadette Soubirous had visions of Mary in Lourdes in 1858. We also know that Sister Maria Lúcia had a vision of Mary in 1917 in Portugal. We also know that Joseph Smith had visions that gave rise to Mormonism. We consider true and from God only the visions of Paul. But what is the criterion to accept from God the visions of Paul and refute the other visions? A Christian in the first century could have said that the visions of Jesus by Paul are from Satan just as we say that the visions of Jesus by Margaret Mary Alacoque in 1673 are from Satan. To say that only the visions of Paul are truly from God—is that not a belief based on bias?"*

A: The reason we know Paul had visions is because **the**

evidence proves that the Bible is inspired by God and, therefore, of divine origin. Hence, whatever it reports actually happened. However, that same Bible maintains that miracles (i.e., supernatural empowerment from God) served their purpose and were consequently terminated toward the end of the first century (e.g., 1 Corinthians 13:8-10). [See the AP article at: <http://apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=11&article=1399&topic=293>].

Further, one can examine the alleged vision of each person and ascertain whether it contradicts the Bible. If it contradicts the Bible, it is obviously a hoax or the result of a well-meaning but misguided individual. For example, Joseph Smith's claims have been debunked. The *Book of Mormon* contradicts the *Doctrine and Covenants*, and both contradict the Bible. See the AP articles at: <http://apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=11&topic=80>.

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SPEAKING SCHEDULES

Kyle Butt

Nov. 30-Dec. 2 Orlando, FL (407) 423-4301

Eric Lyons

December 4,6,11 Denver, CO (303) 986-5800

December 9 Wetumpka, AL (334) 567-6561

Dave Miller

December 2 Montgomery, AL (334) 264-2985

Jeff Miller

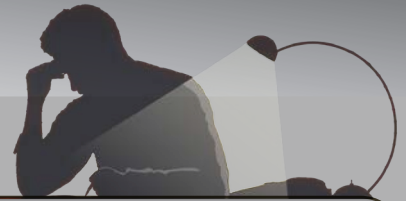
December 7-8 Casey, IL (678) 815-2140

December 9 Montgomery, AL (334) 263-2985



NOTE FROM

The Editor



New AP Book: *Baptism & the Greek Made Simple*

Apologetics Press is an organization that was founded for the purpose of defending the Christian faith in accordance with the directive of 1 Peter 3:15 (cf. Philippians 1:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; 1 John 4:1). The organization has historically specialized, in particular, in defending the Genesis account of Creation against the contentions of evolutionists and atheists. Likewise, considerable attention has been devoted to proving the inspiration of the Bible and refuting attacks against its divine origin. We have also focused on defending the deity of Christ. These three foundational pillars of the Christian religion have occupied the bulk of AP's resources, energy, and efforts.

However, we have also occasionally given attention to the distinctions that exist between the church identified in the New Testament as Jesus founded and fashioned her (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 1:20-23; 4:4; 5:25-27) on the one hand, and the churches that have arisen since the first century, including Catholicism and Protestant denominationalism, on the other hand. For example, God's scheme of redemption, formulated by Him in eternity (Ephesians 3:10-11; Revelation 13:8), has been the object of tampering to the extent that the great

doctrines of faith and grace have been pitted against the equally divine doctrine of water baptism. To that end, we have just released a new book that is designed to show the average person how simple and understandable is the purpose of baptism as stated by the Holy Spirit in the Greek language.

One does not have to know Greek to enjoy and profit from this book. The grammatical details of the primary verses on baptism are so explained that the average person can grasp the Spirit's intent. When one examines these details, one cannot help but be perplexed by the widespread rejection of the design of baptism as God intended. But you must see for yourself. Spending some serious study time with this book will enrich your life and cause you to marvel at the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ.



Dave Miller

See Center Spread
for More Details